



## City and County of Swansea

### Notice of Meeting

You are invited to attend a Meeting of the

## Scrutiny Performance Panel – Development & Regeneration

**At:** Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS Teams

**On:** Tuesday, 11 July 2023

**Time:** 2.00 pm

**Convenor:** Councillor Chris Holley OBE

#### **Membership:**

Councillors: P M Black, C M J Evans, E W Fitzgerald, T J Hennegan, P R Hood-Williams, L James, D H Jenkins, M H Jones, S M Jones, J W Jones, M W Locke, W G Thomas, M S Tribe and T M White

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### Agenda

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|----------|---|--------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>Confirmation of Convener</b>   |              |
| <b>2</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b>  |              |
| <b>3</b> | <b>Disclosure of Personal and Prejudicial Interests</b><br><a href="http://www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests">www.swansea.gov.uk/disclosuresofinterests</a>   |              |
| <b>4</b> | <b>Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips</b>  |              |
| <b>5</b> | <b>Minutes</b><br>To receive the minutes of the previous meeting(s) and agree as an accurate record.  | <b>1 - 5</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>Public Questions</b><br>Questions can be submitted in writing to Scrutiny <a href="mailto:scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk">scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk</a> up until noon on the working day prior to the meeting. Written questions take precedence. Public may attend and ask questions in person if time allows. Questions must relate to items on the open part of the agenda and will be dealt with in a 10 minute period. |              |
| <b>7</b> | <b>Swansea Arena Update</b><br>Cllr Robert Francis-Davies - Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration, Events & Tourism   | <b>6 - 8</b> |

Lee Richards – City Centre Team Leader  
Lisa Mart – Venue Director at Swansea Arena

- |           |  |                |
|-----------|--|----------------|
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b><br>Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment,<br>Regeneration, Events & Tourism<br>Phil Holmes – Head of Planning and City Regeneration<br>Huw Mowbray - Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic<br>Manager | <b>9 - 11</b>  |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Annual Review</b><br>Review of items covered in the Work Plan 2022-23.  | <b>12 - 15</b> |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Letters</b>   | <b>16 - 21</b> |

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 12 September 2023 at 10.00 am



**Huw Evans**  
**Head of Democratic Services**  
**Tuesday, 4 July 2023**

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**Contact: Scrutiny Officer - 01792 636292**

# Agenda Item 5



City and County of Swansea

## Minutes of the Scrutiny Performance Panel – Development & Regeneration

Multi-Location Meeting - Gloucester Room, Guildhall / MS  
Teams

Monday, 20 March 2023 at 10.00 am

**Present:** Councillor C A Holley (Chair) Presided

**Councillor(s)**

P M Black  
P R Hood-Williams  
M W Locke  
T M White

**Councillor(s)**

C M J Evans  
L James  
W G Thomas

**Councillor(s)**

E W Fitzgerald  
J W Jones  
M S Tribe

**Other Attendees**

Cllr Robert Francis-  
Davies

Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Tourism

**Officer(s)**

Phillip Holmes  
Huw Mowbray  
Paul Relf  
Rachel Percival

Head of Planning and City Regeneration  
Development & Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager  
Economic Development and External Funding Manager  
Scrutiny Officer

**Apologies for Absence**

Councillor(s): D H Jenkins and M H Jones

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**36 Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests**

No interests were disclosed.

**37 Prohibition of Whipped Votes and Declaration of Party Whips**

None.

**38 Minutes**

The Panel agreed the minutes from previous meetings.

**39 Public Questions**

No questions were submitted by members of the public.

#### **40 Audit Wales Report - Town Centre Regeneration**

Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Minister for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism and Paul Relf, Economic Development and External Funding Manager attended to discuss this item. The following points were made –

- The Audit Wales report reflects back on a number of decades and captures the changing needs and uses of city centres across Wales. The report doesn't cover anything that was unknown or unfamiliar to Council Members and officers.
- There is positivity with the progress in Swansea City Centre compared to other cities, and there is ambition for Swansea to continue growing and developing.
- There are increasingly more private sector schemes with additional funding to plug the viability gap which can be a mix of loan and grant provision. This helps to reduce risk and enable private sector investments.
- 95% of businesses in Swansea are microbusiness which is defined by those who employ under 250 staff.
- City centre needs change over time and getting the right balance is key. Going forward the city centre will provide a mix of uses with flexible spaces that can be changed as needs change, smaller units have proved popular. Housing above shops has been added forming new communities and increasing trade.
- Communication channels with public bodies are important with dialogue across all sectors taking into account procurement frameworks particularly when resources are scarce. This allows for decisions to be made quickly when needed.
- The city centre and the district centres are eligible for place making grant support and the creation of a Place Plan. Place Plans have an agreed template for formulation which takes an action based approach.
- Swansea is the biggest user in Wales of the Town Centre Loan Fund.
- Enforcement Action Plans are created with the support of Welsh Government, which supports resolution before the point of enforcement.
- The Economic Recovery Fund has also been a helpful source of funding and supports microbusinesses across the county.
- The audit report comments on the Town Centre First Policy not yet being fully embedded. The Council are using Place Plans to pull together all the different strands of this Policy. This is an ongoing journey to keep all these things in balance, listen to what people want and nudge things in the right direction.
- This is an all Wales audit, the first one that's been done for a while for this sector. Comparisons against other Local Authorities in relation to the audit would be useful but are not available.
- Guidance and strategy from Welsh Government's for Local Authorities would be helpful to mitigate the inconstant approach across Wales mentioned in the Audit Report.
- The considerable investment going into Swansea is unique and needs to be treated as such, a big change and money spent is required to achieve this.

#### **41 Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report**

The latest regular monitoring report on regeneration programme / projects was presented to the Panel, for any comments / views on progress and achievements.

Huw Mowbray, Development & Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager, provided relevant updates on the following:

Copr Bay:

- Snagging works are being completed at the moment with costs being met by the contractor.
- Ticket sales at the Arena have gone up to over 200,000. Sales are positive with plans to break into the conference market.
- Resolution is ongoing with the North Block regarding the paint on the steelwork.
- Venue capacity is variable depending on a seated or standing set up.
- There have been funding issues with the hotel however it now has a developer. A town centre loan is secure to help deliver the hotel with a report to Cabinet in due course.
- Further hotels in the city will enable future ticket sales at the Arena. The Marriott has also recently refurbished.
- The bridge has just been shortlisted a planning award.
- Maintenance in the play park has been identified and awaiting arrival of parts.

Shaping Swansea:

- As the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid was unsuccessful, discussion with Welsh Government around other funding sources is ongoing. There will also be another round of LUF bidding.

Swansea Central North:

- Talks are taking place with Urban Splash regarding the delivery programme and strategy for the first phase of development.
- Discussions are being held with Welsh Government regarding a small element of gap funding where the majority of funding would be provided by private sector funding via Urban Splash.
- Shared Prosperity Fund and Transforming Towns bids are also in development.

71/72 The Kingsway:

- Construction is advancing. The building is now up to the first floor level.
- 25,000sq foot is currently let, letting and branding agents are currently being procured to market the rest.
- There have been some supply chain issues but the Council have a fixed price contract, compromises with the developer are made when appropriate.

Civic Centre redevelopment:

- Meetings are being held with Cadw regarding the potential listing of the Civic Centre.
- Urban Splash are working on designs.

Tan 15 Development and Flood Risk:

- Welsh Government have gone out for consultation again and the original draft has been suspended.

- There have been some substantial changes in the Welsh Government approach and there is positivity that the new draft will strike a better balance between flood risk and development.
- Tan 15 will affect the many coastal towns and cities in Wales and not just Swansea.
- The Welsh Local Government Association and planning officers have made a number of recommendations.

#### Skyline:

- The initial public consultation has been completed with a large turnout with overall a positive response. Consultation reports will be submitted as part of the planning application with a submission aim of July 2023.
- As well as a £3 million grant from the Welsh Government, there is an ongoing discussion with Skyline about funding. Skyline are putting in around £36m however in order to meet their internal rate of return (IRR) a further investment may be needed.
- An annual pass for Swansea residents will be available for £40.
- Building works are due to commence around December 2023/January 2024.
- The Highways department are continuing to look at options for the park and ride and continue to have ongoing discussions with the stadium.

#### Powerhouse Redevelopment Hafod Copperworks:

- Penderyn have taken partial occupation. Fit out started in February.
- An outcome is imminent for further funding to cover additional costs.

#### The Laboratory Building:

- This is ready for refurbishment. Now the LUF Bid has been confirmed discussions are being held to move this development further on.

#### Lower Swansea Valley:

- Teams are just starting to be put in place for this development which has an estimated completion date of March 2023.
- Further detail on this development will be provided in due course.

#### Palace Theatre:

- The estimated completion date in the end of 2023.
- Programme is still in development however completion target is December 23/January 24.
- This development has received positive feedback from the Theatres Trust.
- Tramshed have agreed to lease the building.

#### Inward Investment:

- The Council hosted a day with the Welsh Government Invest Team highlighting Swansea's offer.

#### Copperworks Pontoon:

- Side railings are currently being installed. Lighting along part of the footpath will be completed shortly.
- The lease been completed with the Duke of Beaufort's Estate.

- Site investigations are being carried out.
- Survey works have commenced for the Boardwalk towards the Hafod area.
- Three further pontoons are also in development. Urban Splash are developing one on the St Thomas side of the river, and there are an additional two further pontoons at High Street and near the Stadium. There is no current time frame for these and will be part of a later development phase.
- Repairs to the nearby Bascule Bridge are progressing.

#### **42 Work Plan 2022/23**

The Panel noted the Work Plan.

The meeting ended at 11.31 am

**Chair**

# Agenda Item 7



## Report of the Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy and Investment, Regeneration & Tourism

Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel –  
11 July 2023

### Project Review: Swansea Arena

<b>Purpose:</b>	This report will provide information and updates on Swansea Arena after one year of trading.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Review the information provided and feedback any comments in a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Rob Stewart, (Leader) Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance and Strategy Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Lee Richards, City Centre Team Leader

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel meets every two months to review the 'health' of the City Centre and regeneration projects within Swansea.
- 1.2 As part of its monitoring role, the Panel have requested a progress update/review of Swansea Arena now that it has completed one year of trading.
- 1.3 The Panel are asked to review the report and ask any questions which they may have, in response to the information provided. The Panel may then follow up the meeting with a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member to convey its views and any recommendations.

#### 2. Update on a year's performance

- 2.1 The statistics listed below give a picture of performance so far.
  - 261,500 (approx.) people have come through the door to date.
  - 74 ticketed performances, as well as 45 days of conferences, exhibitions, banquets and graduations (not including set-up days or meeting room use) to date.



- Additionally, in-venue hosted Creative Learning events number 32, with 1,340 solely attending these.
- 183,591 tickets sold so far to date.
- 78.9% occupancy on ticketed shows for FY23, up on expectation of 65% for first year.

### **3. Social Media**

- 3.1 The Arena has been received well received on social media. Average monthly Impressions sit at 2,070,293.

### **4. Partnership Working**

- 4.1 Close working partnership with council both in regards to operational management of Copr Bay, but also a future view to collaborate on city wide Conferencing.
- 4.2 Monthly meetings with SCC Events Team to ensure a balanced approach to programming across venues and calendar.
- 4.3 Excellent support from SCC Licensing team – especially in regards to challenging standing events.
- 4.4 ATG were very happy to host Purple Flag Assessors to venue to demonstrate their collaborative working approach across the city.

### **5. Successes and Challenges**

- 5.1 ATG are very happy to report that their event numbers are on par with other venues of similar size and business model for FY23 and now moving in to FY24. ATG advise that they have proven themselves capable of an “Arena Scale Tour” with visits from Alice Cooper, Busted, Royal Blood, Kaiser Chiefs, etc. The challenge post Covid with the more risk averse promoters is encouraging them to come to a new venue and location off their usual routing.
- 5.2 ATG are building up the business case for this with their high occupancies and many sold out shows are proving there is demand to the west of the country. As this business case grows ATG will grow the quality of the programme as well as the number – specifically around full capacity events (3500).
- 5.3 Utilities and Inflation continue to be the biggest challenges for the venue – with utilities in yr1 being 5 times higher in cost that in the initial business plan. Exploring service providers and monitoring the consumption is being undertaken.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** None

# Agenda Item 8



## Report of the Convener

Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel –  
11 July 2023

### Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report

<b>Purpose:</b>	The monitoring report will provide information and update on the regeneration programme and projects in Swansea.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	Review the departmental 'Dashboard' report and feedback any comments to the relevant Cabinet Member.
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration & Tourism
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Huw Mowbray, Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel meets every two months to review the 'health' of the City Centre and regeneration projects within Swansea.
- 1.2 As part of its monitoring role, a departmental 'Programme / Project Monitoring Report' is made available to the Panel for review and scrutiny. This report contains updates on the regeneration programme and various projects throughout Swansea and provides detail on key activities / stages and timelines where relevant.
- 1.3 The Panel are asked to review the report and ask any questions which they may have, in response to the information provided. The Panel may then follow up the meeting with a letter to the relevant Cabinet Member to convey its views and any recommendations.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:** Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report

<b>Regeneration Scrutiny – Summary Report</b>	
Reporting Period	June 2023

<b>Project: Copr Bay</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Progress being made to finalise all works.</li> <li>▪ Scaffolding is being re-erected to encase the upper sections of the north car park in order to remediate perimeter paint on the steel beams at the contractors cost. .</li> <li>▪ Commercial tenants awaiting occupation of new units on Cupid Way</li> <li>▪ Incomplete public facing works are being prioritised and spiral stair is now complete! A review of all other outstanding work and snags is underway together with a review of the first years performance of the scheme.</li> </ul>

<b>Project: Shaping Swansea</b>
<p><b>St Thomas</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urban Splash progressing the masterplan.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hafod</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urban Splash have appointed architects to progress the wider masterplan, liaising with officers delivering the Lower Swansea Valley LUF projects.</li> </ul> <p><b>Strategic and Funding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urban Splash and Council officers met with the Design Commission for Wales to discuss 'place plans' re</li> <li>▪ Shared Propensity Fund bid - awaiting the outcome for Swansea Central and City Waterfront sites.</li> </ul> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Urban Splash to provide programme of development.</li> </ul>

<b>Project: Swansea Central North</b>
<p><b>Offices</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encouraging tenant engagement on multiple blocks.</li> <li>▪ Stage 1 design completed on PSH A.</li> <li>▪ Strategy and delivery programme supports growth in rental values across the city.</li> </ul> <p><b>St. Davids</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Design work progressing, with sustainable, flexible approach.</li> </ul> <p><b>Funding and Strategic</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meeting with WG on funding held.</li> <li>▪ Levelling Up bid for round 3 being scoped</li> <li>▪ Shared Propensity Fund bid for work up costs submitted – awaiting outcome.</li> <li>▪ Interdependencies relating to the Civic Centre decant and Public Sector Hub A are acknowledged and identified as a priority consideration.</li> </ul> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contractual agreements discussions to progress to next stage.</li> <li>▪ Ongoing exploration of funding solutions for Public Sector Hub office.</li> </ul>

<b>Project: 71/72 The Kingsway</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Current claims are being discussed with the Contractor to see whether a settlement agreement can be reached.</li> <li>▪ The Yard design – concept design approved.</li> <li>▪ Branding consultants appointed and are preparing marketing details.</li> <li>▪ Current interest from potential occupiers is being followed up</li> <li>▪ Specialist to advise on management of the building, service charge and procurement of a property management agent appointed.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project: Castle Square</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Build Contract Tender Process-</b> Tender opportunity for Castle Square issued on Sell to Wales. Tenders received and being analysed.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project: Skyline</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awaiting result of land registration as this will allow the Public Open Space notice to be advertised.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project: Powerhouse Redevelopment Hafod Copperworks</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Penderyn fit out progressing. Soft opening scheduled for the 18<sup>th</sup> June; official opening mid July.</li> <li>▪ Institute of Historic Building Conservation visit scheduled for the 22nd June.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project: Palace Theatre</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Institute of Historic Building Conservation visit scheduled for the 22nd June.</li> <li>▪ Construction Excellence visit to be scheduled before completion of the works.</li> </ul>	

<b>Project: Levelling Up Fund – Lower Swansea Valley</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ End Date March 2025 to expend and deliver grant award.</li> <li>▪ Design Team Meetings set up – includes colleagues from Regeneration, Urban Splash and Planning</li> <li>▪ Stakeholder identification underway and stakeholder engagement will commence in coming weeks</li> <li>▪ Client project team to attend masterplanning meeting with Regeneration colleagues and work with Urban Splash</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Project 1a - Laboratory:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Preparing for enabling package to be tendered via framework, prior to main works being tendered.</li> <li>▪ Preparations ongoing to go out via the South West Wales Civil Engineering Contractors Framework.</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Project 2 – The Strand Arches</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting with National Rail scheduled for 26/06</li> </ul>	

# Agenda Item 9



## Report of the Convener

### Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel

### Annual Work Plan Review 2022-23

<b>Purpose:</b>	As the municipal year ends, it is good practice to reflect on the Panel's work, experience, and effectiveness.
<b>Content:</b>	A summary of the year's activities and achievements is provided.
<b>Councillors are being asked to:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reflect on the year's work; and</li><li>• Share ideas to improve the effectiveness of scrutiny</li></ul>
<b>Lead Councillor:</b>	Councillor Chris Holley, Convener of the Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel
<b>Lead Officer &amp; Report Author:</b>	Rachel Percival, Scrutiny Officer E-mail: <a href="mailto:rachel.percival@swansea.gov.uk">rachel.percival@swansea.gov.uk</a>

## 1. Background

- 1.1 As this is the final meeting of this municipal year, the Panel is invited to reflect on the year's scrutiny work, experience and effectiveness. Any ideas that will improve the effectiveness of the scrutiny of Development & Regeneration, and scrutiny generally, are welcome.
- 1.2 To aid Panel members, a summary of the year's work is attached.
- 1.3 Some of the questions the Panel may want to consider:
  - Have things worked well within the Panel over the past year?
  - Has the Panel's work focused on the right things?
  - What, if anything, could be done better?
  - What have we learnt that will help us to improve and develop future scrutiny?

## 2. Overview

- 2.1 The Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel has been responsible for ongoing monitoring of Council performance in relation to development and regeneration, including the 'health' of the city centre and wider economic development across Swansea.
- 2.2 The Panel has a membership of 15 councillors.

### **3. Remit of the Panel**

- 3.1 To support regular monitoring of key development and regeneration activity the Panel has received the 'Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring' report at each meeting, providing overview of all projects and assessment of progress, highlighting, for example, notable achievements, relevant risks, any major issues /delays, etc. This provides a regular 'health check' on development and regeneration activity to facilitate challenge by the Panel. The Panel has then, where necessary, drilled down on specific work, to provide a more in-depth level of scrutiny. This has included discussion over the past year, on: City Centre Retail, the Tourism Destination Management Plan and the Audit Wales Report on Town Centre Regeneration.
- 3.2 The Panel has written to relevant Cabinet Members, to convey its views including suggested action, arising from meeting discussions. Letters, and responses where requested, were reported back to the Panel for comments and discussion as necessary.

### **4. Supporting Data**

There have been 4 Panel Meetings which were held on 5 September. 14 November, 30 January and 20 March. The final meeting of the municipal year on 15 May was cancelled. 4 Conveners letters have been sent to Cabinet Members. Attendance from the Panel on average has been 73%. Meeting discussions have regularly been reported on in the local press.

### **5. Future Scrutiny Work Programme**

- 5.1 The continuation of a Development & Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel, or otherwise other arrangement, will be a matter for Councillors in the new Council year.

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A - Completed Work Plan 2022-2023

## Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel Work Plan 2022-23

<b>Meeting 1</b>  5 September 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b>              Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism              Phil Holmes – Head of Planning and City Regeneration              Huw Mowbray - Development and Physical Regeneration Strategic Manager</li> <li>• <b>Draft Panel Work Plan 2022/23</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 2</b>  14 November 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>• <b>Focussed Topic: City Centre Retail</b>              Councillor Rob Stewart – Cabinet Member for Economy, Finance &amp; Strategy (Leader)              Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism              Paul Relf – Economic Development and External Funding Manager              Russell Greenslade – Chief Executive, Swansea BID</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 3</b>  23 January 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>• <b>Focussed Topic: Tourism Destination Management Plan</b>              Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism              Steve Hopkins – Tourism and Marketing Manager              Stephen Crocker – Chair of Tourism Swansea Bay</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 4</b> 20 March 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>• <b>Audit Wales Report – Town Centre Regeneration</b>              Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism              Paul Relf – Economic Development and External Funding Manager</li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 5</b> <b>CANCELLED</b> 15 May 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b></li> </ul>
<b>Meeting 6</b> <b>2pm</b> 11 July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report</b></li> <li>• <b>Focussed Topic: Project Review - Swansea Arena</b>              Cllr Robert Francis-Davies – Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration &amp; Tourism</li> </ul>



	Lee Richards – City Centre Team Leader Lisa Mart – Venue Director at Swansea Arena
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Possible other specific topics for future meetings:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>City Deal ‘Swansea specific’ Projects</b>	would need to complement regional scrutiny
<b>Rural Development Programme / Plan</b>	from previous Panel interest
<b>Historic / Listed Buildings</b>	potential carry over from last year and also mentioned at this year’s Work Planning Conference - looking at ones fallen into disrepair and what is happening in terms of redevelopment and restoration
<b>New Build Housing Towers e.g., student accommodation</b>	raised at this year’s Work Planning Conference - concern about the support available in terms of health services and education given number of new high-rise dwellings that are being built around the city, for the large number of new people who would be moving into the area. What is the process, who is informed?
<b>SA1 development &amp; supporting infrastructure / services</b>	an issue from Scrutiny public survey – concerns about supporting infrastructure given growth in residential development, e.g., road safety, pavements, public transport links

# Agenda Item 10



**To:**  
**Cllr Robert Francis-Davies**  
**Cabinet Member for Investment,**  
**Regeneration & Tourism**

*Please ask for:*  
*Gofynnwch am:*

Scrutiny

*Direct Line:*  
*Llinell Uniongyrchol:*

01792 636292

*e-Mail*  
*e-Bost:*

scrutiny@swansea.gov.uk

**BY EMAIL**

*Date*  
*Dyddiad:*

4 May 2023

**CC: Cabinet Members**

**Summary:** This is a letter from the Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Performance Panel to the Cabinet Member for Investment, Regeneration and Tourism, following the meeting of the Panel on 20 March 2023. It covers the Audit Wales Report on Town Centre Regeneration and the Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report. This letter does not require a response.

Dear Cllr Francis-Davies,

On the 20 March, the Panel met to consider the response to the Audit Wales Report on Town Centre Regeneration and the Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report. We are grateful to yourself and officers for their attendance and contributions.

### **Audit Wales Report on Town Centre Regeneration**

We noted that the Audit Wales Report reflects on a broad sweep of issues over a number of decades and does not reveal anything that was unknown or unfamiliar to the Panel or to you and your officers. You shared with us your positivity for the future and ambitions for the City Centre with an emphasis on doing things in a way that is right for the benefit for the people of Swansea.

Through addressing the themes in the report the officer highlighted how City Centre needs have changed over time and getting the right balance is key, including the regeneration of older buildings. Going forward the City Centre will cater for a mix of uses with flexible spaces that can be changed as needs change. Smaller units have proved popular and housing above shops has been added, forming new communities and increasing trade. You discussed having a long term approach including support to micro businesses which make up around 95% of business in Swansea which in turn supports the multiple communities around Swansea. Communication channels with public bodies were also highlighted as important with dialogue across all sectors, taking into account procurement frameworks particularly when resources are scarce. This allows for decisions to be made quickly when needed.

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY / TROSOLWG A CHRAFFU**

**SWANSEA COUNCIL / CYNGOR ABERTAW**

**GUILDHALL, SWANSEA, SA1 4PE / NEUADD Y DDINAS, ABERTAW, SA1 4PE**

[www.swansea.gov.uk](http://www.swansea.gov.uk) / [www.abertawe.gov.uk](http://www.abertawe.gov.uk)

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The officer highlighted some of the support available including Place Making Grants, Place Plans, strategic projects and private sector schemes with a mix of loan and grant funding to plug viability gaps. In addition there is the Town Centre Loan Fund of which Swansea is the biggest user in Wales. There is also a live Enforcement Action Plan which with support from Welsh Government, works with problem buildings to find resolution to avoid enforcement where possible. The Economic Recovery Fund has also been a helpful source of funding and has supported a number of micro businesses.

The report comments on the Town Centre First Policy not yet being fully embedded. The Council are using Place Plans to pull together all the different strands of this Policy which officers reported is an ongoing journey to keep all these things in balance, listen to what people want and nudge things in the right direction.

We are mindful that many issues outlined in the report have affected all towns and cities in Wales. We would be interested to know how other Local Authorities in Wales have responded to the Audit Report but are aware this information is not available. We would be interested in the Welsh Government's response to this report because they have the opportunity to provide proper guidance and strategy for Local Authorities in Wales and have not done so. Your officers felt that in regards to guidance, the Place Plans do provide a template for Welsh Local Authorities and provides an opportunity to consider actions. Whilst we agree that Place Plans have a role we still feel there would be benefit from a national strategy instead of relying on Councils doing place making as part of planning rather than as part of regeneration.

We commented that retail will continue to reduce in the City Centre with larger businesses going online and query whether this provides an opening for smaller local businesses. Your officer echoed this and said that many smaller businesses' have been successful with some building their businesses into smaller local communities.

We have concerns that Local Authorities will be required to intervene in the development process by supplying incentives to the private sector to invest in Swansea. This may be a reflection of the spending power Swansea has and perhaps the profit margins are not significant enough for businesses to invest in Swansea. Your officers discussed their aim to create affordable spaces for a variety of business with the private sector coming forward in increasing numbers.

Overall we feel that Swansea is moving in the right direction and are grateful to the work of officers to capitalise on grant opportunities and that we are starting to see more private sector developments.

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## **Regeneration Programme / Project Monitoring Report**

### **Copr Bay**

We were informed that snagging is progressing and that there are ongoing discussions to finalize works relating to the painting of the steelwork in the north block. It was clarified that this would be at a cost to the contractor. It was reported that the ticket sales had gone up to over 200,000 and that the Arena's capacity fluctuates depending on the layout. We asked how the ticket sales compare to the business plan and were told that it is probably slightly less but the business plan is based on maturity in year 3 with plans to break into the conference market.

We asked for an update on the hotel development and were informed that there is a developer but funding is an issue therefore a Town Centre Loan is being considered which officers aim to report to Cabinet on in May. We had concerns about how much intervention was coming from the Council and the lack of private sector funding, your officers informed us that this is due to the value of hotels compared to the building costs however work is ongoing to find a viable solution whilst providing a quality development in keeping with the Arena and bridge which has been nominated for a planning award.

We fed back to officers that the play park is in need of a few repairs and as a flagship scheme it is important these are dealt with quickly but the officers were aware of this and provided reassurance these were being dealt with.

We were informed that the Swansea Marriott Hotel has rebranded and upgraded and the lack of competition with other hotels was discussed. We asked about a historic restrictive covenant attached to the Marriott and your officer informed us the covenant says hotels cannot be built on land that's adjacent, therefore further conversation will be required about what this means and to provide support to the Marriott going forward in relation to the new hotel and the development of the Civic Centre.

### **Shaping Swansea**

As Shaping Swansea was unsuccessful with a Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid, we were informed that other funding sources are being explored through ongoing discussion with Welsh Government and there is a further round of LUF coming up.

### **Swansea Central North**

We heard that Urban Splash are looking at the first development phase and discussions are being held with Welsh Government for gap funding whilst Urban Splash will provide private sector funding. The gap funding needs required are currently in discussion.

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### **71/72 The Kingsway**

We were updated that construction is advancing, with the build now up to first floor level and that marketing and branding agents are now in procurement stages. We asked for an update on the letting of the property as we had been informed at a previous Panel that some of the space had already been let. Officers reported that 25,000 square foot is under offer and the letting agents will advertise the rest of the space.

We inquired if there were any supply chain or cost issues and were informed that although there are, due to the Council's fixed price contract these costs will be for the contractor. However, help will be given to the contractor where possible in regards to making changes that won't impact the quality or end maintenance.

### **Civic Centre Relocation**

The officer reported that meetings being held with Cadw in regards to the potential listing. Urban Splash are also working on the designs.

### **TAN15 Development and Flood Risk**

We heard about the recent work that has gone into TAN15 by officers and that Welsh Government have gone out for consolation again with the original document suspended and an updated version likely to be available in October. We asked further about the areas of concern and how the changes to TAN15 will make a difference, we were informed that Swansea City Centre is largely a zone 3 flood risk area which is the highest risk. The changes to TAN15 will allow works to be carried out in these zones with mitigation. The Hafod area isn't as badly affected as was previously thought so the flood maps will be changed accordingly.

### **Skyline**

We heard that the initial public consultation has been completed with a positive response overall. This will be included with the planning application which is aiming for a July submission. We hope that unlike Castle Square this will be brought before Planning Committee as there are some issues with this that need to be heard in the public domain.

We asked about the total development cost and were informed it is around £40m with around £36m coming from Skyline. We noted the £3 million grant from Welsh Government which had recently been in the news and raised concerns that the article reported Swansea Council were also in negotiation about putting funds into Skyline. We asked why this was required as the amount from Skyline and the Welsh Government Grant seems to cover the total costs. We were informed that money from

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the Council was never ruled out and that some funding would be required to reduce Skyline's Internal Rate of Return from around 13 years to 10 however this has not been finalised. Whether this is a loan or grant is part of the ongoing discussion and final costs are variable. We would like an update to the Panel on these discussions when available.

After asking when the development may start the officer informed us Skyline are aiming for December 23/January 24. We asked for an update on the potential move of the nearby park and ride and were told this is still with the highways department with various options being considered and ongoing discussions with the stadium.

### **Powerhouse Redevelopment Hafod Copperworks**

We were updated that Penderyn have taken partial occupation and begun fit out. We queried why additional funding was being sought and was told there were some ongoing additional costs due to the complexity of the site.

### **Laboratory Building**

We were informed that scaffolding is up and it is ready for refurbishment. As the LUF bid has been confirmed, discussions are underway to move this development forward.

### **Lower Swansea Valley**

This development is also part of the successful LUF Bid and we were informed that further details will be supplied to us due course with teams being put in place and completion aim of March 2025.

### **Palace Theatre**

Officers report this is well underway with a completion aim of the end of 2023, we felt this may be optimistic. You highlighted the positive report from the Theatres Trust regarding the development. We asked if there were any cost issues, it was reported that there have been issues with cost escalation but these were the same issues affecting all capital projects at the current time. Officers gave assurances that this was being managed and were looking to secure additional grants.

### **Inward Investment**

The Council hosted an event welcoming various partners from around Swansea to present to the Welsh Government Invest team to highlight Swansea's offer. This work is ongoing and details are confidential however the Panel would be interested to have those details at some point in the future as it is important that Members see what the investment pattern looks like.

### **Copperworks Pontoon**

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We were updated that quayside railings are being installed, including lighting along the footpath. The lease been completed with the Duke of Beaufort and procurement for the main work is complete with completion in early summer. We asked for an update on work to join up the Hafod end of the boardwalk. We were informed that survey works have commenced there.

We also asked about the plans for the other pontoons and were informed that Urban Splash are drawing up plans for the pontoon on the St Thomas side of the river with two further pontoons, one at High Street and one near the bascule bridge also planned for a later phase. We queried when the bascule bridge will be repaired and were informed that repairs have begun and have received a further grant award from Cadw to help with purchase of timber.

### **Exclusion of the Public**

For the next municipal year we would like to receive more information regarding costs and financing in relation to a number of projects. We will therefore be adding closed sessions at the end of Panel meetings when appropriate. The next closed session will held at the end of our Panel meeting on Tuesday 11 July 2023.

### **Your Response**

We are interested in any thoughts you may have on the contents of this letter but, in this instance, we require no formal written response.

Yours sincerely,



### **Councillor Chris Holley**

Convener, Development and Regeneration Performance Panel

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